



University of Pittsburgh  
*School of Medicine and Medical Center*

Postal Regulatory Commission  
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June 11, 2021

Dear Postal Regulatory Commission,

I submit this letter to comment on Docket No. N2021-1, Postal Service proposed changes to First Class Mail service. The Postal Service proposes to revise the existing service standards for first class mail and periodicals. This would have major adverse effects on service on a nationwide level. These changes are expected to result in longer times for first class and periodical mail delivery due to extended driving time required between the origin and destination processing facilities. I urge the Postal Service to reconsider this proposal and not implement it.

As a research scientist at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and Medical Center, I rely heavily on the Postal Service in my work. Certain types of scientific research are done primarily through the mail in the form of questionnaires and surveys. Many other aspects of my research require usual mail, such as mailing legal consenting documents to allow a participant to participate in research. You undoubtedly realize that many Americans do not have access to internet services. This has become a crisis during Covid. Additionally, due to the sensitive nature of my work and the need to protect participants' privacy and anonymity, timely mail service is critical to communicating with our research participants. During the COVID pandemic I relied heavily on the Postal Service to continue scientific research. Without timely and reliable service our research could not have been performed.

It is therefore a major problem and burden for researchers like me to face the extended delivery times that will result given the N2021-1 proposal for first class mail delivery. This change will impact my ability to do important research supported by agencies such as the National Institutes of Health. It places an unfair burden on potential and actual research participants who may be forced to use less secure and private means of providing information through internet applications. Moreover, the longer the transit time in the mail, the more data are lost—this is already happening and the proposed changes will greatly magnify this problem.

I request the Postal Regulatory Commission consider the impact these proposed changes would have on science. The United States is renowned for the high quality, impactful science it conducts. The Postal Service should not implement such a potentially damaging proposal at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary Amanda".

Mary Amanda Dew, Ph.D.

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and Clinical and Translational Science

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